

JANIE CROW

Crochet Beading

To say I enjoy working with beads is a bit of an understatement. I can't resist their sparkle and love the extra colour and texture they add to my work. I always use beads from the Debbie Abrahams range, which are specifically sourced for knitters and crocheters. Debbie's beads come in a variety of shades in sizes 6/0 and 8/0.

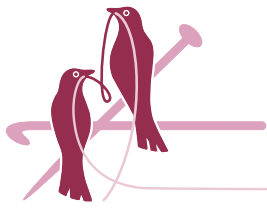
- *Threading beads onto yarn*
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Bead size

Beads are often given a number reference. The number refers to the size of the hole through the centre of the bead. The higher the number, the smaller the hole.

Size 8/0 beads are suitable for 4ply and finer yarns.

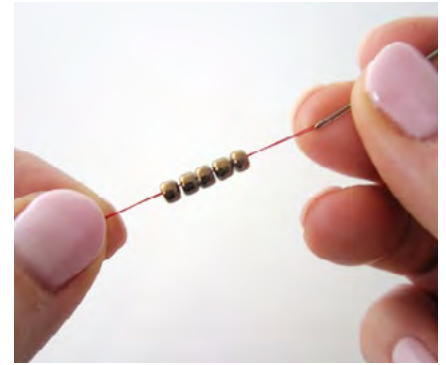
Size 6/0 beads are suitable for yarns thicker than 4ply such as Rowan Cotton Glace and most DK weight yarns.



Threading beads onto yarn

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The size needle you would usually use to sew a knitting yarn will be far too large to thread beads, so you are going to make your own version of a needle threader in order to get the beads onto your knitting yarn. It is essential that the beads are threaded onto the yarn before casting on.



Step 1: Thread the needle with the sewing cotton and make a small knot to join the ends and form a loop. Move the knot so that it is not in line horizontally with the sewing needle, place the knitting yarn through the loop created by the sewing thread.

Step 2: Pass the beads over the eye of the needle and push down onto the sewing thread. I tend to thread about five beads at a time.

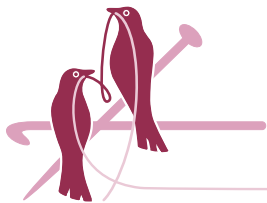
Step 3: Push the beads along the sewing thread then down onto the knitting yarn. The first few beads may be a bit tricky, but so long as the beads are large enough, threading will become easier.

Note

If using a large number of beads it may be necessary to thread the beads onto the yarn in sections, too many pre-strung beads can make crochet difficult and can affect tension/gauge and the appearance of the yarn.

Step 4: Once you have threaded all the beads onto the yarn distribute them over the first few meters of yarn and re-wind the yarn.





Beaded double crochet

US: Beaded single crochet

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When you incorporate beads into a double (single) crochet stitch the bead sits to one side of the stitch and not centrally across the whole stitch. If you follow the instructions that I have given you below, the bead will sit on the left side of the stitch as you look at the crochet fabric



Step 1: With the wrong side facing you, work to where a bead is required.



Step 2: Slide the bead along the yarn until it sits as close to the hook as possible.



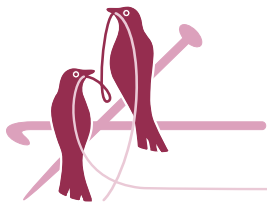
Step 3: Insert your hook through the next stitch and catch the yarn around the hook.

Note

You can choose to place the bead on the second step of the double crochet stitch – once you have drawn the yarn through the crochet stitch and before you complete the stitch – this will make the bead sit on the right side of the stitch as you look at the crochet fabric.



Step 4: Draw the yarn through the stitch, making sure that the bead stays in place on the right side of the work. Complete the double (single) crochet stitch.



Beaded treble crochet

US: Beaded double crochet

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When you incorporate beads into a treble (double) crochet stitch as described below, the bead sits just below the top loop



Step 1: With the wrong side facing you, work to where a bead is required. Hold the beads in small batches over your left index finger.



Step 2: Wrap yarn around the hook, draw yarn through the stitch so that there are three loops on the hook.



Step 3: Wrap the yarn around the hook and draw through two loops so that there are two loops on the hook.



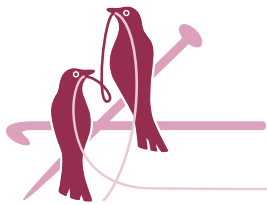
Step 4: Slide the bead as far as you can towards the crochet hook.



Step 5: Catch the yarn beyond the bead and pull through to complete the stitch.



Note: If you are working a fan, don't worry too much if your first beaded treble of the fan is a little loose – they have a tendency to tighten up the more you do.



Finishing

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Washing and care instructions

It is a good idea to save a ball band from your yarn so that you have a record of washing instructions should you wish to clean your project in the future. Even if your chosen yarn is machine washable it is not always a good idea to wash a beaded or sequined fabric in the washing machine. Instead, wash by hand using a mild detergent and be ultra careful that the beads or sequins do not cause threads to snag. When drying, avoid a rigorous spin in the machine and dry flat where possible.

Blocking and pressing

The word 'press' conjures up images of trouser presses in hotel rooms and industrial size presses at the launderette. A press, by nature, flattens things. If you set out to 'press' your knitting or crochet then you are in danger of breaking down the fibres within the yarn and squashing the life out of it – a knitted or crochet fabric which has been pressed using heat will invariably never recover – however much you wash or brush it. If you press a beaded fabric with a hot iron you could also

be in danger of damaging the beads and stretching the knitted or crochet fabric. Sequins are especially sensitive to heat and can even melt if touched by a hot iron!

In order to 'block and press' your work correctly you should lay your pieces face down onto a large soft surface – such as a bath towel or a blocking mat and pin them out to size, making sure that you are not over stretching them. Pin the pieces down using long pins at a flattish angle. Place a tea towel or muslin over the top of your pieces. Hold a steam iron approx. 10cm above your piece and allow your work to be 'steamed' for a few seconds, making sure that at no point the hot iron touches your crochet pieces. Leave the pieces in place until they have cooled down and dried completely